The Farm.

[*For the Farmer and Mechanic.*

Letter From Wake.

Your paper is, of course, a necessity to the farmer. We want to read the opinions and experiences of other farmers and compare them with what we have already tried. We want to know what other farmers are doing and thinking, and if we desire to be really posted, nothing more easy; we take the FARMER AND MECHANIC and in its columns we alway find what we desire to know.

I am sorry that it has fallen to my lot, to try and inform your many readers about the care and breeding of fowls. I shall therefore confine myself to the breeds and varieties of fowls that I raise and as I am simply a fancier I will not say that they are the best though I am content.

African Geese are the largest bodied, yield more feathers and lay more eggs than any other breed. I have known one goose to lay sixty-two eggs in a season, do not care to set, and will care for the young hatched by hens ducks etc., as well as if they were hatched by them. Cross with the common goose and make a more symetrical fowl than the pure African.

White China geese are pure white, and very upright in carriage, their necks are long and have a beautiful curve, yellow legs and bill with a large knot on its base. The yield of feathers is not as large as that of the African, though of the finest quality and the flesh is excellent, are splendid layers, good setters, and lay at all seasons except Winter. At times they make a peculiar noise especially at night, almost like the low notes of a flute, are very intelligent and are better safeguards to poultry or intruders of any kind than a dog, look very much like a swan on the water and *are often called the* "Swan Goose."

Imperial Pekin ducks are in body about the size of the common Goose with a shape like our puddle duck; they are creamy white, with yellow leg and bill. Are good layers (about one hundred eggs at a latter) can't fly and are of better flavor than any breed known to me, eat anything, splendid followers of a plough for grubs and very hardy, yield an abundance of feathers equal in quality to those of the finest geese.

Muscovy ducks, every one knows the quality and traits of this bird as a scavinger, their gastronic qualities, their wandering habits, love of ease, they are called the o'possum of their breed.

China Ducks are very small, pure white, every fussy, good layers, careful of their young and very hardy, but not much of a table fowl.

Australian Turkey, pure white, very large, good layers and setters, will hatch as many as three broods in a season with good care, lay from two to fourteen eggs at a latter, soft nice feathers, like to be picked, ornamental but hard to raise.

Black or African Guinea, there is nothing peculiar about this fowl except it differs from the common guinea in its domestic qualities, laying with the other fowls and scarcely ever hiding its nest.

Lilac or Turkish guinea, about the same size as our common guinea and has many of the qualities of the African, beautiful plumage and is a very proud bird; both of the above breeds are very useful as destroyers of bugs and very valuable as layers.

Pea fowls are very ornamental, but very troublesome, seem to think they are better than all other fowls, great destroyers of young turkeys, ducks, &c., only lay about five eggs, good setters and take care of their young, the tail feathers of the male make pretty ornamental fly brushes.

I will continue in another issue on the red pile and Irish gray game, B. B. game bantams, handon and pheasant chicken and the fantail, ruffle and white Turbit pigeon.

G. T. S.

Stock Law No. 3.

I have said in another article that the cost of production was one to be well considered by the farmers of this county.

I say then, that so far as there is a want of success in farming in Alamance, it is due to the fact that it costs too much to grow our staple products, corn, wheat, rye, oats, tobacco and hay. Now, it is a significant fact, that one of the greatest costs of production bearing so heavily upon the agriculture of Alamance lies in its fences.

Let us take for illustration, Melvill Township, that has perhaps, as good a population of enterprising citizens, possessing as much vim and spirit for improvement, with as good natural soil as any township in the county, and apply a few facts from the record and see if it won't set them to thinking seriously upon the subject under consideration. Eleven men have registered 1,383 dollars worth of stock, and 46,600 panels of fence worth at 20 cents a pannel, 9,320 dollars, showing that they enjoy the glorious privilege (if there is any glory in it) of paying 9 dollars for fencing for every dollars worth of stock they own. This might be termed glory without the hallelujah. Again 122 men and women have listed 756 head of cattle, worth 4,536 dollars, 1,243 head of hogs, worth 4,626 dollars, 691 head of sheep, worth 1,036 dollars, 3 goats worth 3 dollars, aggregating 8,101 dollars, with 222,050 panels of fence worth at 20 cents a panel $44,410. Supposing Melville to be an average township and we multiply the $8,201 dollars worth of stock by 11, which I believe is the number of townships in the county, we would have in Alamance 90,211 dollars worth of stock, and to multiply the 222,050 panels of fence by the same number would give 2,444,550 pannels or 24,442,300 rails, worth at 20 cents a pannel, 488,570 dollars nearly half a million of non productive capital invested in fences. The interest on this amount at 6 per cent., would be $29,310, more than would be required to build three separate fences 10 rails high round the county. Let us make a few figures to sustain this assertion.

Supposing the distance round the county to be 70 miles estimating 320 rods to the mile, we would have 22,400 rods, counting 20 rails to the rod would require 448,000 rails, these at 20 cents a panel or 40 cents a rod would be worth $8,960, deducting this amount from the $448,510 now invested in fences and you will have balance left of 439,550 dollars to build all necessary inside fences, an amount amply sufficient I think to satisfy the most incredulous and skeptical upon this question. Deduct 20 per cent. of this amount which I think would be amply sufficient for all necessary pasture and lot fences, and we would still have a balance of $383,600. Now if we will adopt the stock law and use this amount in giving our children a generous, liberal, industrial, business education to prepare them for the active and important duties of after life, we will do more for them than all the free schools has done for twenty years past, or may yet do, under their present progress and management for the next half century. It is alleged that to adopt the stock law would be to oppress the poor. I take it that the land holders are at present more in the power of the tenants and renters, than the latter are in the power of the former. The custom of renting with us has been; that the tenant or renter is required to make rails, build and keep in repair all the fences on the farm or lands he cultivates. Now when a stock law is in force, he would get rid of this surplus labor and expense on his part, and his time could be used in production, making composts and improvement of the lands he cultivates, and the owners of the lands can afford to pay better wages for labor, than under the present system. I have a letter in my possession from a very enterprising, intelligent, influential and observing farmer, from Mecklenburg county, stating that in the sections where the stock law had been in operation for several years, the poorer classes, both white and black, who had opposed and voted against its adoption at first the latter is so well pleased with it now, that they almost without exception, petition the last legislature to enact the present stock law for that county, and could not under any circumstances be induced to vote for its repeal.

He further writes that tenants and renters formerly got, when they were required to keep in repair the fences on the lands they worked, and that they enjoy and share the benefits of pasture for their stock in common with the proprietor and owners of the land on which they live. My correspondent further states that the finest vineyards, orchards and farms are all open and perfectly secure without fencing, there being no stock running at large to molest or destroy. He adds further that the people of Mecklenburg are very fast improving and multiplying their stock. Now in the miserable and dilapidated condition of the fences generally if one is "pierced with pains" for a law suit, let him resort to an action of trespass, a penal part of fence law, said to be "brimful" of peril. If one would see anything of laws delay from the "alphabet to the diploma," let him try his hand in an action of trespass against one schooled in the intricacies of law.

Fellow countrymen I refer you to the records to sustain the facts herein set forth. If you find them correct, let us call for the repeal of the present fence law, which puts the saddle on the wrong horse, fencing out instead of fencing in.

Let us call for the repeal of a law that oppresses at every turn, and encumbers every estate.

Let us call for and demand of the next legislature the enactment of a law which will shield the crops and restrain the cattle.

Let us call for a law which shall speak the thing it means; and mean what it speaketh.

Let us demand the enactment of a law which needs no "boiling down" to extract its judicial essence, but which shall be sample, concise and efficient, and without perplexing ingenuities.—*D. A. M., in Alamance Gleaner.*

Something About Grasses—Orchard Grass.

BY RICHARD H. COLLINS, AUTHOR OF COLLIN'S HISTORY OF KENTUCKY.

In England more than two hundred varieties of grass are cultivated for use of animals. In the United States the cultivated grasses do not exceed one-eighth of that number—possibly not a tenth. And yet nature seems to have provided such as are most suitable or best adapted to the wants of the animals indigenous to America. A hundred years ago the cane lands of Kentucky—which Simon Kenton and other adventurers in vain sought for in canoes along the shores of the Ohio river—sustained and fattened immense herds of buffalo and deer. Many years later, the French and Indian ponies of the Northwest territory (now the State of Wisconsin and part of Michigan) upon the natural grasses and browse of that inhospitable region kept in good condition for a spring market and for work. The *mesquit* or *musket* grass of the plains of Mexico and Texas has for two generations past made the raising of "longhorns" immensely profitable, requiring only a herdsman to mark them and keep them together.

To enumerate the kinds of grass by their botanical titles might excite the wonder and possibly the admiration of the unscientific. It could do no real good, or impart no practical information. To speak of them as the Annual Meadow, or the Meadow Fox-tail, or the Flat-stalked Meadow, or the Roughish Meadow, or the Fescues, or the Timothy, or the Egyptian, or the Hungarian, or the Bermuda, or the Buffalo, or the Gama, or the Crab, or the Tornilla, or the Prairie, or the Arundo, or the Tussac, or the Grama, or the Sweet-scented Vernal, or the Red Top, on the Narrow Leaved, or the Florin, would scarcely less confound and confuse than to talk of the *Alopecurus pratensis* or the *Pea pratensis*, or the *Festuca elatior* or *loleacea*, or the *Dactylis glomerata*, or a hundred other jaw-breaking terms that are full of meaning to the learned, but are worse than Greek or Dutch to the plain farmer, no matter how much he may need to be taught of their value for crops and for grazing or soiling. Curiosity sometimes opens the way for valuable lessons in farm life, but not often.

Some forty years ago, or more, at Woburn in England, the Duke of Bedford, through assistants, instituted some highly interesting, scientific and practical experiments to ascertain the comparative product and value of twenty-six of the leading perennial grasses in that country. He ascertained the height in the wild state in inches, the soil employed in raising each, the stage of growth when weighed, the weight per acre when dried, the loss in drying, the pounds of nutritive matter per acre, the month and day of the month when each kind was in flower, and also when each kind was in seed, the proportionate value of the grass in flower to the grass in seed, and the general character of each grass experimented on.

These experiments proved beyond question that certain grass are best when cut in seed, others best when cut in flower. To the former belong the sweet-scented vernal grass, the downy out grass, the roughish meadow grass, the rough head cock's foot (i. e. orchard) grass the perennial rye grass, and the meadow cat's tail grass. Of those best cut in flower are meadow fox-tail, smooth stalked meadow grass, upright bent grass, norrow leaved meadow grass, red clover, lucern, the several kinds of fescue grass, meadow soft grass, and yellow oat grass.

Lucern has very largely the most nutritive matter in one acre, 7,659 pounds, and is the best for soiling. Next is the tall fescue grass, it cut in flower, 3,988 pounds; but which falls off to 2,392 pounds if cut in seed. Next is meadow cat's tail grass, when cut in seed, 3,669 pounds; but which has only 1,595 pounds per acre of nutritive matter if cut in flower. Red clover furnishes 1,914 pounds of nutritive matter per acre; and sainfoin only 345 pounds. Sweet-scented soft grass affords only 610 pounds when cut in flower, but increases if cut when in seed to 2,232 pounds, or 365 per cent. Rough head orchard grass affords 1,089 in flower and 1,451 pounds in seed—only 33 per cent. increase.

There is comparatively little farming in the West of the really intelligent kind—a fact that of itself speaks volumes in favor of the agricultural and mechanical colleges established, a few years ago, through the munificence of the general government in most of the States. Very few farmers are sufficiently educated in the line of their vocation to understand these differences in the grasses, or their relative value, or the adaptability of the soils of their farms to produce to advantage any or all of them, or the kind most useful to the stock they raise. We commend to them the cock's foot (best known as orchard) grass.

Cultivation improves its quality. Sinclair, as the result of his experiments and observation, a quarter of a century or more ago, asserted that orchard grass—if kept closely cropped by cattle, or by the scythe, or when made into hay—was superior to rye grass and some others, as a pasture grass. Oxen, horses and sheep eat it readily. Fessenden, an agricultural writer of force and accuracy, said he should raise it in preference to almost any other grass; he observed that cows are very fond of it. Cooper rated it above timothy; and said it was gradually taking the place of timothy on the best farms about Philphia, Colonel Powell, a scientific and judicious farmer, tried orchard grass for ten years, and then published to the agricultural world that it contained more pasturage than any artificial grass he had seen in America.

One of the most intelligent of the old-time Virginia farmers, nearly thirty years ago, Col. E. Walker, of Lewisburg, recommended it in strong terms. Its growing in tussocks could be obviated by sowing thick. For either meadow or pasture, two bushels of clean seed should be sown on an acre. Some of his neighbors, who had watched its growth most closely, considered it unequaled to mix with clover for meadow. It ripens at the same time, which admits the clover to be cut at perfection: and from its great length of stalks, keeps the clover from falling, and thus becoming sour and unfit for hay. Meadow prepared by sowing one gallon of clover, with half a bushel of orchard grass seed to the acre, will afford the largest yield of hay to the acre of probably any known grasses. But too long an article will weary the reader, or frighten from its perusal some who really need to profit by its suggestions. Some other time, if your readers seem to take an interest in the subject, I will give them the gathered experience of several very practical and sensible farmers, who have "made money" out of the study of grasses. Farmers, to be successful, must study farming. And those who claim to have studied farming for sixty years or more, find every day new sources agricultural knowledge and new fields for scientific cultivation.

The Phonograph.

Edison and his phonograph amused a lazy crowd at the capitol the other day. The instrument howled, "There was a little girl with a curl on her forehead," etc., to the great delight of those who had never heard this classical hit. It coughed, sneezed, or sang at the will of the operator. Members turned pale at the sight of the terrible machine that has come crowding into their field of talking. They saw visions of a congress of phonographs rattling off the sentiments of their districts from prepared strips of tin-foil. It looks to them like witchcraft. Senator Beck, of Kentucky, said it was all a humbug. Said he: "The operator is making game of us. He is a ventriloquist." "Try the machine yourself," said the operator. Beck pushed the operator back and walked hastily to the machine. He thought a moment, and then his eyes twinkled as he howled into the machine: "You are an arrant humbug, and you know it." The machine was reversed, and the crank turned energetically, bawling in reply: "You are an arrant humbug, and you know it." The crowded room burst into a yell of laughter and applause as Beck threw up his hands and said: "My God, I am satisfied." Sam Cox recited, "To be, or not to be," and the phonograph repeated it after him. During the afternoon members crowded about the phonograph like a pack of school-boys. In the evening the strips of tin-foil bearing vocal impressions circulated more freely than the dollar of our daddies.

The Marriage of a Woman to a Woman.

Maraney Hughes was married in September last to a person who was known as Samuel M. Pollard. Her relatives opposed the match, and she eloped and married without their knowledge, and a short time after their marriage Pollard confessed to her that she had had trouble with her relatives in the East; had lost her property, and assumed the disguise of a man for the reason that avenues for making money would be open to her in that character which would be closed to her as a woman. Pollard has never given her any particular reason for doing her this great wrong, but is believed to have been actuated by a foolish pride in appearing in the character of a married man. The victim was ashamed to acknowledge that she had been so imposed upon, and shrunk from admitting the truth. Pollard, without actually threatening her life, repeatedly intimated that it would be bad for her if she exposed her, and so she kept silence until a fortnight ago, when her aunt got an intimation of the fact, and questioned her closely, and she related to her the whole story. The victim says that the woman's real name is Sarah M. Pollard, and that her trunk is filled with feminine apparel. A complaint was filed yesterday by J. C. Howerton, accusing Pollard of perjury in swearing when he took out the marriage license that he was a male.—*Tuscarora Nevada Times.*

Precautions in Scarlet Fever.

The funerals of those who die of infectious diseases should be strictly private. Disinfect the clothes, bedding and room by sprinkling them with a solution of commercial carbolic acid, two parts to 100 parts of water, or other disinfectants may be used in a similar way. Let the door be closed for several days. Sulphur may be burned in the room sufficiently to fill it with sulphur four times a day. Continue this for four or more days. Then strip off the paper, crape the walls and ceiling, and whitewash them. Scrub the woodwork with strong suds and a solution of carbolic acid.

To Consumptives.

A physician makes the following suggestion to those liable to consumption: A particular kind of exercise is to be reccommended for those whose chests are narrow, whose shoulders stoop, and who have a hereditary predisposition to consumption. If it is systematically practiced along with other means of health, it is a safeguard against the invasion of this disease. It is voluntary inspiration. Nothing is more simple. Stand erect, throw the shoulders back, and the hands behind; then inhale pure air to the full capacity of the lungs, and retain it a few seconds by an increased effort; then it may be slowly exhaled. After one or two natural inspirations, let the act be repeated, and so on for ten or fifteen minutes, twice daily. Not only is this simple procedure a safeguard against consumption, but in the opinion of some learned physicians, it can even cure it when it has already commenced.

FOWL RAISERS.—A good hint to fowl raisers is afforded in the fact that all wild birds feed their young upon animal (insect) food, even if berries, buds, seeds, &c., form the natural diet of the parents or adults of the same species. Thus young chickens will not thrive so well without it as they will if supplied with animal food, in some shape. Earth worms are capital for very young chicks. Cooked meat, chopped up fine, with boiled rice and potatoes, is a very nourishing and acceptable dish for them when young. But not too much of this—nor must it be given too often. Otherwise they scour from the excess of the meat feed. A little two or three times a day will help them, until they get to be six weeks old. By that time they will be strong enough to run in the fields and grass, where they will gather a more natural supply of this kind of food, and, generally plenty of it.—*Poultry World.*

SUGAR FROM SORGHUM.—A Nebraska farmer claims to have made 600 pounds of bright sugar and 153 gallons of amber syrup from two acres of cane. The seed planted was of the early amber variety. The sugar was obtained by hanging the thick syrup in coffee sacks after it began to granulate.

CURE FOR CHOKING CATTLE.—Should cattle be at any time in danger of choking, by reason of any foreign substance sticking in the throat, take of fine chewing tobacco enough to make a ball as large as a hen's egg, dampen it with molasses so that it can be compressed into a ball and will adhere closely, elevate the animal's head, pull out the tongue and crowd the ball as far down the throat as possible. In fifteen minutes it will cause sickness and vomiting, relaxing the muscles so that the potato or whatever may cause the choking will be thrown up.

Miss Lucena Clark, of New Haven, was so afraid that she might be induced to attend the Moody and Sankey meetings and be converted that she drowned herself in the river.

The Chicago *Times* is in hopes that during the reflective hours of her sick-bed, Dr. Mary Walker will succeed in devising a method of preventing pantaloons bagging at the knees.

Somebody remarks that young ladies look on a boy as a nuisance until he is past sixteen, when he generally doubles up in value each year, until, like a meerschaum pipe, he is priceless.

Immense stores of wild honey were recently found in the fissures of the rocks in the mountain regions of California by workmen engaged in blasting a roadway for the Southern Pacific Railroad.

A few years ago, in Comanche county, Texas, a number of domestic chickens deserted by their owner, took to the brush, and the woods are full of wild chickens. They are numbered by the thousand, fly like hawks, and are numbered as game.

Since January 1, the gold coin of the San Francisco mint has been $10,200,000, and the silver coinage $4,160,000, of which $4,160,000 were in trade dollars. Since the begining of the current fiscal year the mint has coined $31,299,600 in gold, and $11,281,000 in silver.

A country fellow went out one night to see his sweetheart, and for a long time could think of nothing to say. At last, snow beginning to fall heavily, he told her that his fathers sheep would be lost. "Well," said she kindly taking him by the hand, "I'll take care of one of them."

The exportation of no manufactured product of the farm has increased of late years so rapidly as that of cheese. In 1860 but 15,515,799 pounds were sent abroad, while last year the quantity thus finding a market had increased to 107,464,666 pounds, a decidedly gratifying exhibit.

Twelve men may work a month to paint a house white. A bad boy or vicious man may in an hour, by throwing mud or filth, spoil the work of his betters. So one lying tongue, or one meddling neighbor, may by idle talk, distroy the life beauty or harmony of a neighborhood.

Spent lye, from soap manufactories, is valuable for mingling with muck to make a good compost for application to land. It neutralizes the acid of the muck, renders it more soluble and adds valuable nitrogenous substance to it. A large amount of this spent lye is wasted about the soap manufactories, which ought to be saved and used for muck composts.

A cement for attaching brass work to bottle necks, lamps, etc., is made by boiling three parts of rosin with one part of caustic soda, and five of water. The composition is then mixed with half its weight of plaster of Paris. It sets firmly, is said to be of great adhesive power, not permeable by petroleum, a low conductor of heat, and but superficially attacked by hot water.

One hundred and sixty girls in Paris are working upon the balloon which is to make frequent ascents during the Exposition. It is to be the largest in the world, will carry fifty passengers, and has a restaurant and bar attached. A rope 800 feet in length will be attached to the bottom, and for the sum of two francs the curious visitors can have the windlass, which is to operate the affair, set at work to take them that distance above their fellow men towards the heaven of their childhood.